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Agenda item 6. Supporting Resource Mobilization for IMAP implementation

Proposed Elements for Project Concept Notes Relevant to IMAP Implementation

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Note by the Secretariat

In line with Decisions IG.23/14 on the Programme of Work and Budget 2017-2018 and IG.22/7 on the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria, as well as with the objectives of the EcAp-MEDII EU funded project, implemented by UN Environment/MAP between 2015-2019, the Secretariat has undertaken, in cooperation with Contracting Parties, an analysis of their specific capacity for national IMAP implementation, with a strong focus on the Southern Mediterranean.

Building on this analysis, the Secretariat has developed the “Funding Strategy for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean, with a special emphasis on the implementation needs of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme in the Southern Mediterranean” (the Ecosystem Approach Funding Strategy, UNEP/MED WG.450/Inf.3).

The Ecosystem Approach Funding Strategy provides an overview of potential funding sources. The main funding instruments analyzed and found relevant for Ecosystem Approach implementation in the Mediterranean, include the EU Multi-Annual Financial Instrument (where the European Neighborhood Policy, including TAIEX¹ and Horizon 2020 research funding were identified as key funding sources) and Global Environment Facility (GEF), where specific analysis was undertaken in light of the opportunities offered by the draft GEF7 Replenishment²; other International Financial Instruments, private funds and innovative funding instruments, and green finance mechanisms.

Key findings of Ecosystem Approach Funding Strategy include the following:

- Data collection in line with IMAP by all riparian countries of the Mediterranean as planned and necessary for the upcoming 2023 Quality Status Report of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast (QSR2023) requires substantive resources, which can only be addressed by diverse sources of funding (including own, national funds);
- The upcoming 2023 Quality Status Report, which is planned to be a quantitative national data based report, will enable investors, donors to have a more impact based, targeted approach in their respective investments, which relate to achieving respective SDG14 targets. Therefore, support of IMAP implementation may attract more investment;
- A considerable number of Contracting Parties have specific needs for IMAP implementation, in relation to capacity building on monitoring, collecting baseline data, purchase of additional necessary equipment and undertaking surveying, sampling (with average estimated one-time cost for setting up the system of 700,000 USD and average surveying cost per implementation cycle of 400,000 USD based on the country capacity assessments undertaken in 2016-17);
- Sub-regional cooperation, piloting of common indicators and joint monitoring, foreseen under IMAP also require additional resources, which may range between 200,000 USD and 800,000 USD, depending on the nature of the common indicator and the scope of cooperation;
- Regional cooperation and exchange of best practices, with strengthened science-policy interface, require additional resources (between 50,000-100,000 USD for meeting preparation and organization) and provide cost-efficient ways of capacity building and strengthening sustainability of ongoing scientific projects. This would make knowledge available on cost-efficient techniques and the latest relevant scientific findings to the policy makers and national monitoring experts;

¹ Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument of the European Commission:
https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/tenders/taix_en

² <https://www.thegef.org/events/gef-7-replenishment>

- During the finalization of the current cycle of IMAP implementation (2016-2021) new projects should be initiated, with a focus on IMAP implementation;
- With a more long-term view, resources would need to be mobilized to strengthen overall IMAP implementation, with a focus on the area which was identified as most challenging (biodiversity, Non-Indigenous Species and fisheries) by Contracting Parties.

Building on the key findings of the Ecosystem Approach Funding Strategy, as well as on views of Contracting Parties expressed during recent Meetings of Monitoring Correspondence Groups and Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group, the Secretariat has prepared two draft concept notes to address both short-term (2019-2021) and long-term (2020-2024) implementation needs.

The draft concept notes are aiming to strengthen ecosystem approach in the Mediterranean, with a specific focus on:

- Supporting Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) implementation and successful delivery of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (2019-2021);
- Supporting Biodiversity Protection through Sustainable Marine Resources Management, with a focus on sustainable fisheries (2020-2024).

The Meeting is expected to provide feedback on these initial draft project concept notes and give recommendations on specific fund-raising directions.

Table of Contents

	Pages
UN Environment/MAP Concept Note Proposal for strengthened implementation of the ecosystem approach in the Mediterranean: Supporting Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) implementation and successful delivery of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report	1-3
UN Environment/MAP Concept Note Proposal for strengthened implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean: Supporting Biodiversity Protection through Sustainable Marine Resources Management, with a focus on sustainable fisheries, 2020-2024	4-6

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List of Abbreviations / Acronyms

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
EO	Ecological Objective
EU	European Union
FRA	Fisheries Restricted Areas
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GES	Good Environmental Status
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IFI	International Financial Institute
IMAP	Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria
IMO	International Maritime Organization
LMEs	Large Marine Ecosystems
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
ML	Marine Litter
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSSD	Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
MFf	Multiannual Financial Framework of the EU
NIS	Non-Indigenous Species
OECMs	Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures
PPSA	Particularly Sensitive Sea Area
QSR	Quality Status Report
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SPA	Specially Protected Areas
SPAMIs	Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance
SPI	Science-Policy Interface
TAIEX	Technical Assistance and Information Exchange
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollars

Strengthened implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean: Supporting Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) implementation and successful delivery of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report

1. With the overall objective to strengthen the implementation of the ecosystem approach with a specific focus on IMAP implementation needs, in line with the key findings of the Ecosystem Approach Funding Strategy, the aim of the proposed project is to support:

- a. implementation of national Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programmes (national IMAPs) in targeted countries; and
- b. preparation of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report, in line with the recommendations and key findings of Decision IG. 23/6 on the 2017 Mediterranean Quality Status Report.

Objective 1: To support national IMAPs implementation in targeted countries and their efforts to provide quality assured data that are essential for the development of the 2023 Mediterranean QSR (estimated cost 3, 5 million USD)

- Undertaking pilot monitoring of IMAP common indicators in target countries using the risk based approach (with minimum 1 selected common indicator to be piloted per IMAP cluster per country);
- Undertaking country specific trainings on new areas of national IMAPs, with a focus on biodiversity and NIS and new areas of pollution monitoring (Common Indicators 18,19, 20); marine litter; and coast and hydrography;
- Updating and developing assessment criteria on national level for the common indicators of IMAP;
- Supporting target countries in undertaking national integrated assessments for each cluster of IMAP;

Objective 2: To progress on the establishment of assessment criteria of GES on sub-regional/regional level for the 2023 Mediterranean QSR (estimated cost 2 million USD- 500,00/sub-region)

- Strengthening sub-regional cooperation through the establishment of sub-regional network of monitoring and assessment country experts and scientists to exchange best practices in relation to IMAP assessment criteria;
- Establishing 4 Sub-Regional Working Groups to discuss and progress towards the harmonization of assessment criteria methodologies for all four sub-regions of the Mediterranean (East/West/Central/Adriatic);
- Developing sub-regional integrated monitoring and assessment plans in line with IMAP monitoring and assessment needs;
- Developing common assessment criteria on sub-regional level to support sub-regional inputs into the 2023 Mediterranean QSR;
- Implementing at least 1 sub-regional pilot joint monitoring of a common indicator with the participation of at least 3 interested countries.

Objective 3: To strengthen institutional networks and science-policy interface to enhance the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap in synergy with Agenda 2030 implementation efforts (estimated cost 1,200,000 USD)

- Creating a regional network of international and regional organizations, including scientific bodies and non-governmental organizations, which have a mandate related to marine and coastal monitoring and assessment in the region (referred to as partner organizations), to foster regional cooperation for IMAP implementation, thus contributing to regional ocean governance and Agenda 2030;
- Establishing an IMAP Roundtable with relevant partner organizations, with annual meetings, on selected key topics of relevance, with the aim to mobilize joint actions with a specific focus on the development of the 2023 Mediterranean QSR;
- Mapping of ongoing work/products of relevant partner organizations, other Regional Seas related to IMAP implementation, specifically those addressing interface/interaction among Ecological Objectives;
- Strengthening and sustaining Science-Policy Interface (SPI) in priority areas of IMAP implementation (to be identified jointly by policy makers and scientists together in the beginning of the project), both on regional and national level; including on the development needs of the 2023 Mediterranean QSR;
- Analyzing scientific products relevant to the implementation of IMAP and summarizing their potential input to the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report;
- Facilitating information exchange between relevant scientists and policy-makers on specific cross-cutting, priority topics (e.g. scales of monitoring and assessment, GES integration needs) and ensuring that outcomes, recommendations of Science-Policy Workshops are integrated in national, sub-regional and regional implementation of IMAP and in the development of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report;
- Piloting SPI national cooperation in one or two interested countries, with a focus on IMAP data generation needs;
- Preparing publications on how to sustain SPI for full implementation of IMAP and with the ultimate objective to reach GES.

Objective 4: Delivering IMAP Info System for all IMAP common indicators and strengthening knowledge and capacities of countries on the usage of this system (estimated cost 700,000 USD)

- Completing and fully operationalizing the IMAP compatible Info System;
- Developing and further refining Standards and Data Dictionaries for all IMAP common indicators (with candidate indicators also to be included in the new system, in case of data and methodology availability);
- Integrating the IMAP Information system into the INFO/MAP platform;
- Supporting country reporting with specific trainings, in line with specific needs of target countries and in line with the development needs of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report;
- Organizing sub-regional and regional workshops, trainings for target countries on IMAP information system and data management.

2. Approximate time frame of project implementation would be 2019- 2021, following the current implementation cycle of the Ecosystem Approach (2016-2021).

3. Possible financial instruments and related donors with whom outreach could start in the second half of 2018 could include EU (MFF), private funds and innovative funding instruments, such as green investment schemes and green financial products.

UN Environment/MAP Concept Note Proposal for strengthened implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean: Supporting Biodiversity Protection through Sustainable Marine Resources Management, with a focus on sustainable fisheries, 2020-2024

4. With the overall aim to achieve Agenda 2030, through strengthening the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Contracting Parties country efforts to implement their relevant regional legal obligations, the specific focus of the proposal would be to support the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap through strengthened sustainable marine resource sustainable management, mainstreaming biodiversity in key sectors and addressing specific drivers.

5. The proposed project concept note consists of the following components:

Component 1 Marine biodiversity and living resources conservation (countries own resources and potential regional funding, estimated cost of 2,6 million USD)

- Biodiversity mainstreaming, across all sectors, in line with the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD) and with a focus on sustainable fisheries;
- Undertaking natural capital assessment for marine ecosystem, socio-economic analysis of measures for biodiversity protection (cost-efficiency, cost-benefit, multi-criteria), identification and creation of conditions for private finance to be invested in biodiversity mainstreaming (including investments for biodiversity mainstreaming to key sectors, such as fisheries);
- Implementing strategic regional priority actions for the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity in the Mediterranean and respective National Action Plans implementation support, in line with country priorities;
- Addressing direct drivers of biodiversity loss, with a focus on Non-Indigenous Marine Species (NIS) and their specific early detection needs and methods, building on relevant UN Environment/MAP and General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), in relation to NIS Fish Species, policies and on the outcomes of the Joint GFCM-UN Environment/MAP NIS/Fisheries Pilot Study in the Eastern Mediterranean;
- Assessing the ecological coherence of the Mediterranean network of marine protected areas (MPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs, including FRAs, PSSAs, and others);
- Supporting the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, GFCM and other key partners strategies and action plans aiming at achieving CBD Aichi and post-Aichi biodiversity and living resources conservation targets in the Mediterranean, through the establishment of MPAs and OECMs, especially in the Southern and Eastern parts of the Mediterranean, as a sustainable development, blue growth and climate change mitigation tool.

Component 2: Contributing to the Blue Economy, by the implementation of the ecosystem approach through Marine Spatial Planning (countries own resources and potential regional funding, estimated cost of 3,5 million USD)

- Strengthening the blue economy, in line with the MSSD and its specific objective 5 "Transition towards a green and blue economy" and relevant UN Environment/MAP policy framework, with a special emphasis on ecosystem approach implementation through marine spatial planning (MSP) taking IMAP indicators, MSSD indicators (dashboard) and other relevant information (socio-economic, pressures etc.) into account;
- Undertaking vulnerability/cumulative impacts, risk, socio-economic and suitability assessment of the marine environment in line with the status and needs based on IMAP implementation, with a focus on biodiversity, fisheries and NIS indicators;

- Planning suggestions/guidelines for MSP based on the above analysis in demo sites (where biodiversity, fisheries and NIS are priority topics);
- Strengthening based on vulnerability and risk assessment, existing policies, MSSD, ICZM Protocol, MSP efforts, relevant GFCM policies, the recognition of the zones suitable for blue economy activities (e.g. sustainable fisheries; aquaculture), as well as the most appropriate spatial uses in order to (i) reduce/eliminate negative impacts of maritime traffic, leisure activities, seabed exploration and exploitation, etc. on marine environment and (ii) maximize benefits stemming from the mentioned policies and initiative;
- Ensuring Sustainable Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) management, including: species inventories and habitat mappings (taking into account under-represented habitats like pelagic and deep-sea habitats); assessment of the status of mapped habitats and related species; natural capital assessment for marine biodiversity, socio-economic analysis of MPA linked activities (cost-efficiency, cost-benefit, multi-criteria), identification and creating conditions for private finance to be invested in improved management of marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, including Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs), Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs) and MPAs;
- Strengthening of the enforcement and effective management of marine protected areas and Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), and strengthening regional collaboration between UN Environment/MAP, GFCM, Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on area-based management in the Mediterranean;
- Using regulatory, economic and financial instruments for strengthening Blue Economy in the Mediterranean (studies and regional trainings).

Component 3: Reducing ML impacts on marine environment by supporting Marine Litter Regional Plan implementation in the Mediterranean (countries own resources and potential regional funding, estimated cost of 1,9 million USD)

- Building on the Marine Litter Regional Plan, which follows the circular economy concept, address marine litter as a special driver of biodiversity loss;
- Supporting countries in their efforts to implement the Marine Litter Regional Plan, in line with country specific priorities;
- Providing socio-economic analysis of measures aiming to reduce Marine Litter (cost-efficiency, cost-benefit, multi-criteria);
- Building regional alliance on marine litter, developing an Industry Action Plan to implement the Marine Litter Regional Plan;
- Strengthening regional cooperation on marine litter, especially between GFCM and UN Environment/MAP.

6. The envisioned project, in line with the above, would foresee country specific, targeted action, matched with coordinated response to sub-regional and/or regional common challenges.

7. In line with the above, it would foresee between 200-600,000 USD national resources to be committed by participating country, aimed to be matched with additional support from other co-financing sources on sub-regional and/or regional level.

8. In addition, in case of country interest, it could also foresee the above work streams to be linked with UN Environment/MAP and country level ongoing work on ICZM and MSP work as well as with Sustainable Cities initiatives.

9. Project preparation would take place between mid-2018 and mid-2019, with planned implementation between 2020 (or early 2021) and 2024/2025. Possible financial instruments and related donors with who outreach could start as of second half of 2018 could include GEF (GEF7), EU (MFF), next to private funds and innovative funding instruments.